© 2016 Pletikosic and Vlahovic. This article follows the Open Access policy of CC BY NC under Creative Commons attribution license v 4.0.

Submitted: 01/10/2016 - Accepted: 01/11/2016 - Published: 30/12/2016

Public Opinion on the Role of Committees in Environmental Impact Assessment Studies

Merica Pletikosić[1*]

Majda Tafra Vlahović[2]

[1]Environmental Manager, CEMEX Croatia

[2]University of Applied Sciences Baltazar, Croatia

*Email: merica.pletikosic@cemex.com

DOI: 10.26417/ejser.v6i2.p68-77

Abstract

The objectivity of expert committees working on environmental impact assessment studies is under intense public scrutiny. Citizens are often concerned about the potential impact of planned interventions on people's health and the environment, which is why constant and stable communication should be maintained between all interested parties. Expert committees are in charge of addressing concerns coming from the public, private, and civil sectors by keeping communication channels open, efficient, and accessible. The importance of public participation in the procedures of environmental impact assessment is constantly growing, and expert committees involved in decision-making processes related to the assessment of environmental impact studies are exposed to increasing pressure from the public, economic, and civil sectors. This paper presents the results of empirical research on the knowledge and opinions of the concerned public in the Republic of Croatia on the role of expert committees in environmental impact assessment studies. The qualitative study was carried out using a purposive sample and the methods of in-depth interview and participant observation. The grounded theory method was used in the analysis of the empirical material and the quantification of the qualitatively processed coded material was carried out with the Statistica software suite (ver 11. 00). Participants were polarised in

their opinions. Some of the participants believe that expert committees cannot be neutral as they are appointed by the Ministry. On the other hand, a number have stated that they believe the committees to be professional and neutral, that we should maintain trust in public institutions and that committee members should not be in any way associated with or related to the investors behind a particular project. The majority of participants from the *public sector* agrees with this positive opinion of the committees as neutral and professional, as does the majority of the *economic sector*. Participants from the civil sector, on the other hand, have mostly claimed that the committees are not neutral, but are either for or against a project, and that public interest has not been clearly defined in this context.

Keywords: local government, environmental impact assessment, public knowledge

Introduction

In the last few decades, environmental impact assessment has asserted itself as one of the central activities in licensing procedures for industrial, energy, agricultural, infrastructural, and all other larger projects. The main assessment document, the environmental impact study, has become the central element of project preparation as it is the only document that unites and coordinates the ideas, opinions, and interests of all concerned parties from the public, economic, and civil sector. Increased awareness of the need to involve the public in the decision-making process results in better legislation in this area. Each new regulation allows greater rights of the public to participate, thus causing the importance of public participation in the procedures of environmental impact assessment to constantly grow. With a growing awareness of their right to participate in decision-making, the public and its risk perception greatly affect environmental protection policy. Today, the public is concerned more than ever with the existence of problems associated with environmental protection, while the problem of public risk perception in issues related to environmental protection can only be solved through better communication between all of the stakeholders (Malbaša and Jelavić, 2013). By European standards, the interested public is consulted in the conceptual phase of the project, as well as continuously throughout the procedure. European rules provide for early public participation in environmental impact assessment. The goal is early involvement, as well as continuous public participation in the process, creating the preconditions that allow the public to significantly affect the outcome of the environmental impact assessment (Cox, 2013). This is governed by various regulations, which have experienced several amendments from design to date. Following the adoption of the Aarhus Convention, in 2003 the EU adopted the Directive on Public Participation in the Process of Preparing Plans and Programmes Relating to the Environment and changes to the Directive on Environmental Impact Assessment in order to harmonise them with the principles of the Aarhus Convention.

The Aarhus Convention is based on the concept of environmental democracy. Environmental democracy postulates that solving environmental issues should include all those affected by a certain decision, not just the relevant government bodies and economic sector (Ofak, 2009). In this process, all participants must be given equal status in order to prevent the decision-makers from taking only one side's arguments into account. Availability of information is therefore a central part of environmental democracy as it encourages concerned members of the public to become active participants in the decision-making processes related to environmental issues. The terms "public" and "concerned public" are defined by the Convention itself: The term "public" stands for one or more natural or legal persons and their associations, organisations, and groups as defined by local law. The public can be any person, regardless of their citizenship, residence, or headquarters (for legal persons). Discrimination on the basis of citizenship, nationality, residence, or location of headquarters (for legal persons) is forbidden. The term "concerned public" stands for segments of the public that are or could be affected by environmental decision-making, or that are interested in the issue; non-governmental organisations whose work is in the field of environmental protection and that meet all the criteria set by local law will be considered members of the concerned public. This is important for the realisation of the terms set out in the Convention and is related to public participation in the decision-making process. The exact details of how the public is to be informed and consulted, as well as its role in access to legal institutions, are defined individually by every state (Ofak, 2009). The aim of local government in procedures related to environmental impact assessment is to create and maintain awareness within the government itself of the need to communicate with different groups users and to demonstrate a constant concern for the needs and opinions of end-users, all based on the principles of sustainable development. In general, local government establishes an understanding of the policies, processes, and activities of government by informing users, replying, where appropriate, to the criticisms of the authorities, establishing and maintaining effective channels of communication with the public available to the authorities. The importance of public participation in the procedures of environmental impact assessment is constantly growing, and local government is increasingly under pressure from the public, economic, and civil sectors in decision-making processes on the assessment of environmental impact studies. Public participation is a mechanism established with the aim of involving the public in the decision-making process (a procedure governed by legislation), as well as a way of achieving broader social goals. Public administration is tasked with identifying and implementing public interest. In time, we have come to the conclusion that state administrative bodies are not the sources of objective identifying and decision making in the best interest of the public, but are rather arbitrators between the various interests that exist, and the practice has shown that economic and political interests are always stronger than the declarative and non-binding right to a healthy environment. That is why public participation is a challenge to the traditional management/decision-making model implemented by experts or public

administration bodies. It serves not only as a means to control public administration, but as a way to, above all, determine what the public interest is in the first place (Ofak, 2009). The broader social significance of public participation consists of the following goals (Beierle & Cayford, 2002): including public values in the final decision, improving the quality of the final decision, solving conflicts between differing interests, building trust in institutions, educating and informing the public. The success of public participation is defined as the extent to which the five social goals have been realised, i. e. the success of achieving these social goals is proportional to the quality of public participation. The European community regulated this field even before the Aarhus Convention. Moreover, the so-called EIA Directive and the IPPC Directive of the European Community have served as the basis for Appendix I of the Convention (Ofak, 2009). When it comes to public participation, the solution is to be found in more modern legislation. For the past 30 years, the importance of public participation in the procedures of environmental impact assessment has constantly been growing. Little is going to change in practice with no procedural, administrative, and legal instruments for monitoring the processes of environmental impact assessment and decision making in the hands of citizens. *The main objectives of developing effective strategies for involving the public are better understanding, better communication, strengthening the ability/skills to apply the appropriate forms of participation/involvement with respect to the purpose of the process, and strengthening the relationship and cooperation between stakeholders, with the aim of better planning and realisation of (local) sustainable development.* Introducing new legal opportunities for public participation is not sufficient in itself - the public must first learn what it has available and how to use that in order for the process of *social assessment* to be carried out within or prior to the process of environmental impact assessment (Čaldarović, 2006). Public participation is ensured while issuing the decision on integrated environmental protection conditions, which is a novelty in Croatian legislation related to the environment, and it results from further harmonisation with the IPPC Directive (Ofak, 2009). The model of public participation in the process of environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment consists of four steps or ways to participate:

Informing – one-way flow of information from the developer/body responsible for the implementation of the procedure and decision making to the public.

Consulting – two-way flow of information between the public and the developer that allows the public to present their views on the proposed project.

Participating – interactive exchange between the public and the developer, which includes joint analysis and agreed conclusions on the proposed project and its impact.

Negotiating – between key stakeholders of the interested public and the developer in order to build a consensus through a mutually acceptable solution (Ofak, 2009).

The goal of this study was to determine the level of awareness and opinions among members of the general and concerned publics in Croatia on the role of expert committees in procedures related to assessing environmental impact studies.

Based on the defined goal, the following hypothesis was made:

(**H**) There are significant differences in the opinions of entities in target and sector groups when it comes to assessing the role of expert committees in procedures related to environmental impact assessment studies.

Material And Methods

The focus of qualitative research is multi-methodical and includes an interpretative, naturalist approach to the subject of the study. This means that researchers involved in qualitative studies approach the subject in its natural environment and try to understand or interpret phenomena in light of the meanings people associate with them. A qualitative approach implies the learned use and knowledge of a set of various empirical materials – case studies, personal experience, introspection, life stories, interviews, observational, historical, interactive, and visual texts – that describe the routine, problematic moments, and meanings in the lives of individuals. Researchers that employ a qualitative approach have accordingly introduced a wide range of unrelated methods, in the hope that every new method will help better understand the subject of the study (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Sequential approaches to the qualitative method imply detailed research in which the data collected from study participants is integrated with the observations and interpretations of the researcher. By integrating simultaneous information in the data collection process, so that the results of one method can be further processed and expanded with the results of another method, as well as the convergence of qualitative and quantitative data, an all-encompassing view of the study problem can be gained (Creswell, 2003). The inclusion of quantitative methods in a qualitative study has for its goal the integration of differing research methodologies within a single study plan, thus allowing for a more complete grasp in certain areas of the study and the binding of all study stages within a methodological triangulation. In a qualitative study, this triangulation would imply the use of several different methods at the same time in order to collect more accurate and complete information on the subject (Mejovšek, 2013). The qualitative study was carried out using a purposive sample and the methods of in-depth interview and participant observation. The method of grounded theory was used in the analysis of the empirical material. Three basic types of coding were applied: open or initial coding, axial coding, selective coding. The initial coding included the first rearranging and sorting of the data, noting similarities and forming response groups. Final analysis and categorisation of the key concepts created the conceptual matrix with the content of qualitative empirical material in the integrated theoretical framework (Holton, 2007; Charmaz, 1990). Inductive and deductive methods were used on the data, as well as the method of analysis and synthesis, comparison method, classification method, and the

descriptive method (Silverman, 2006). The study was conducted in 2014. Respondent selection was done according to previously set criteria: a target sample of participants in the empirical study who are involved in the procedures relevant to the research either professionally or voluntarily (Pletikosić, 2012). The sample was defined with 100 entities, 46 males and 54 females. The average respondent age was 52. 1 years. Respondents were divided into 10 sub-samples (target groups) which were qualitatively defined with 10 entities:

Study Makers – persons authorised by the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection;

DEVELOPERS – investors;

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT/COMMITTEE – representatives of the governing body conducting the process, and members of committees for study evaluation;

CITIES – representatives of the employees of the city administration for environmental protection responsible for conducting public debates, and spatial planning representatives;

COUNTIES – representatives of the employees of the county administration for environmental protection responsible for conducting public debates, and spatial planning representatives;

ASSOCIATIONS – representatives of non-governmental environmental associations;

CIVIL INITIATIVES – representatives of NGOs and civil society who are involved in the process, but are not environmentally oriented;

ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS – representatives of the Croatian Employers' Association, Croatian Chamber of Commerce, and other economic interest associations;

POLITICAL PARTIES – representatives of political structures which are included in the process;

SCIENTISTS/JOURNALISTS – representatives of academic institutions and journalists who are involved in the process.

Three new qualitatively defined control groups (clusters) were classified based on the above sub-samples:

PUBLIC SECTOR – 40 respondents from target groups: MIN. OF ENVIRONMENT/COMMITTEE, CITY, COUNTY, SCIENTISTS/JOURNALISTS;

CIVIL SECTOR – 30 respondents from target groups: ASSOCIATIONS, CIVIC INITIATIVES, POLITICAL PARTIES;

ECONOMIC SECTOR – 30 respondents from target groups: *STUDY MAKERS, DEVELOPERS, ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS.*

Research material consisted of two dependent (grouping) variables according to the criteria of the target group, the criteria of the control group, and one independent variable. Participants were asked to give their opinion on whether local administration is sufficiently represented in the work of expert committees working on assessing environment impact studies and whether the local community should invest more effort in presenting their own development plans in order to avoid possible future public discontent. We calculated the following descriptive parameters: frequency and cumulative relative values of the responses in the whole sample, and in the predetermined focus and control groups. Processing was carried out using the Statistica Ver. 11. 00 software suite (Petz et al. , 2012).

Results

Quantitative processing of the variable entity matrix was based on the given responses qualitatively defined by the question:

*Do you believe that **expert committees** appointed by the Ministry of Environment are professional and neutral in their work?*

The respondents stated their opinion on whether the committees appointed by the Ministry were neutral and professional in their work.

The answers were defined on three levels:

The first group was classified according to negative responses, and represents those entities who answered:

No, committees always believe themselves to be professional and neutral, but are not a clear representation of public interest; they are not transparent. Discrepancies in member opinions and inflated requests by some of them are always possible in committee work. The president of the committee should always alert other members of anomalies and final decisions should be made by majority vote. Representatives of the relevant institutions are not neutral because they advocate the views of the political forces running the institution.

Quantitatively, these negative responses were coded as zero (0), for the upcoming statistical data processing.

The second group claims that it does not have enough information, does not know or is not sure how to respond, is undecided, and stands by the following positions:

Sometimes, it depends on the political influence and media representation of a particular project. Those who vote “yes” are in favour of the project, while those who vote “no” are not - there are no neutral votes.

Quantitatively, these undecided responses were coded as one (1) for later statistical processing.

The third group of entities responded affirmatively, and argued its views as follows:

Yes, we must trust public institutions. Yes, but I believe that the broader public should be more interested in issues relevant to the community and its development. Yes, but the quality of a committee's work can vary depending on its membership, their knowledge and experience, as well as their ability to accurately represent expert opinion and public interest. There are good committees and there are bad committees. I believe that the committees are professional and neutral in most cases.

Quantitatively, these responses were coded as two (2) for later statistical processing.

Responses to the question were coded in the statistical process under the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional*.

Table 1 shows the frequency of all instances of the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional* in the study.

Participants were polarised in their opinions. 51% of the participants believe that expert committees cannot be neutral because they are appointed by the Ministry and discrepancies in member opinions and inflated requests by some of them are always possible in committee work. This is why the president of the committee should always alert other members of anomalies and final decisions should be made by majority vote. On the other hand, 48% have stated that they believe the committees to be professional and neutral, that we should maintain trust in public institutions and that committee members should not be in any way associated with or related to the investors behind a particular project. Table 2 shows the frequency of the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional* in the 10 predefined *target groups.*

An analysis of Table 2 clearly shows that respondents belonging to different *target groups* are polarised in their opinions when it comes to the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional.* Respondents from NGOs and the civil sector (CIVIL INITIATIVES and NGOs) are fully certain (100%) that expert committees cannot be neutral due to the fact that they are appointed by the Ministry. Most respondents from the target groups POLITICAL PARTIES and SCIENTIST/JOURNALISTS share this opinion, while respondents from the target groups CITIES and COUNTIES, groups that include individuals employed by the city or county administration and responsible for conducting public debates and spatial planning representative, as well as those from the DEVELOPERS and ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS target groups, believe that expert committees are professional and neutral, that we should maintain our trust in institutions and that committee members should not be in any way associated with or related to the investors behind a particular project.

Quantitative analysis of the frequency of the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional* with respect to *sector group* is shown in Table 3.

60% of the respondents from the *public sector* (24 entities) believe that expert committees are professional and neutral, as does 74% (22 entities) of the *economic*

sector. 94% (28 entities) of the *civil sector*, on the other hand, believe that there are no neutral committees, just members who are for or against a project, and that public interest has not been clearly defined.

The coefficient value of the F-test corresponds to 6. 61, with a significance level of p=0. 000, thus confirming that there is a statistically significant difference between the target groups. Table 4 shows the results of post-hoc analysis carried out between target groups for the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional,* N=100.

The results of the Tukey HSD test *post hoc* analysis for the variable *expert committees_professional and neutral* between target groups (as given in Table 4) clearly show that there is a statistically significant difference between all target groups, except scientists and journalists involved in the process (SCIENTISTS/JOURNALISTS target group).

The following hypothesis was made based on the results:

(**H**) There are significant differences in the opinions of entities in target and sector groups when it comes to assessing the role of expert committees in procedures related to environmental impact assessment studies.

The hypothesis is confirmed and accepted in its entirety.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this study was to determine the level of awareness and opinions among members of the general and concerned publics in Croatia on the role of expert committees in procedures related to assessing environmental impact studies. Respondent selection was done according to previously set criteria: a target sample of participants in the empirical study who are involved in the procedures relevant to the research either professionally or voluntarily. The sample was defined with 100 entities, 46 males and 54 females. The average respondent age was 52. 1 years. Respondents were divided into 10 sub-samples (target groups) which were qualitatively defined with 10 entities and additionally classified into three new control sectors (clusters). Research material consisted of two dependent (grouping) variables according to the criteria of the target group, the criteria of the control group, and one independent variable.

51% of the participants believe that expert committees cannot be neutral because they are appointed by the Ministry and discrepancies in member opinions and inflated requests by some of them are always possible in committee work. This is why the president of the committee should always alert other members of anomalies and final decisions should be made by majority vote. On the other hand, 48% have stated that they believe the committees to be professional and neutral, that we should maintain trust in public institutions and that committee members should not be in any way associated with or related to the investors behind a particular project. Respondents were polarised in their opinions. Respondents from NGOs and the civil

sector (CIVIL INITIATIVES and NGOs), for example, are fully certain (100%) that expert committees cannot be neutral due to the fact that they are appointed by the Ministry. Most respondents from the target groups POLITICAL PARTIES and SCIENTIST/JOURNALISTS share this opinion, while respondents from the target groups CITIES and COUNTIES, groups that include individuals employed by the city or county administration and responsible for conducting public debates and spatial planning representative, as well as those from the DEVELOPERS and ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS target groups, believe that expert committees are professional and neutral, that we should maintain our trust in institutions and that committee members should not be in any way associated with or related to the investors behind a particular project. 60% of the respondents from the *public sector* (24 entities) believe that expert committees are professional and neutral, as does 74% (22 entities) of the *economic sector*. 94% (28 entities) of the *civil sector*, on the other hand, believe that there are no neutral committees, just members who are for or against a project, and that public interest has not been clearly defined.

Respondents from the public, economic and civil sectors are divided in their opinions and have a differing view of the role expert committees play in assessing environmental impact studies. The mutual mistrust between the three sectors can only be solved through better communication and improving the quality of public informing and involvement in physical planning procedures, as well as making the work of expert committees more transparent, thus contributing to the democratic aspect of the entire process.

REFERENCES

[1] Beierle, T. C. , & Cayford J. (2002). *Democracy in Practice: Public Participation in Environmental Decisions.* Washington, DC: RFF Press

[2] Charmaz, K. (1990). Discovering Chronic Illness. Using Grounded Theory*, Soc. Sci. Med. ,* 30 (11), pp. 1161-1172.

[3] Cox, R. (2013). *Environmental communication and the public sphere. Third Edition* (pp. 83-105). The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Sage Publications.

[4] Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches. Second edition* (pp. 15-18). University of Nebraska, Lincoln: Sage Publications.

[5] Čaldarović, O. (2006). Conceptualising Nature as Public Good and Aspects of its Valorisation, *Revija za sociologiju, Vol XXXVII. No 1–2,* pp. 47–62.

[6] Denzin, N. K. , & Lincoln Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of Qualitative Research (p. 2.).* London: Sage Publications.

[7] Directive 2003/35/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council providing for public participation in respect of the drawing up of certain plans and programmes relating to the environment and amending with regard to public participation and access to justice Council Directives 85/337/EEC and 96/61/EC. (EIA, 2011/92/EC); Aarhus Convention (NN – MU 1/07).

[8] Holton, J. A. (2007). The Coding Process and Its Challenges. In A. Bryant, & K. Charmaz (Eds.), *Grounded Theory: the Sage Handbook.* London: Thousand Oaks. New Delhi, Singapore: Sage Publications

[9] Malbaša, N. , & Jelavić, V. (2013). Proceedings: Prva regionalna konferencija o procjeni utjecaja na okoliš. In M. Brkić, & N. Mikulić (Eds.), *Povijesni pregled i aktualni problemi procjene utjecaja na okoliš u Republici Hrvatskoj* (pp. 31-43). Zagreb: Hrvatska udruga stručnjaka zaštite prirode i okoliša.

[10] Mejovšek, M. (2013). *Metode znanstvenog istraživanja u društvenim i humanističkim znanostima. Second edition* (p. 161). Jastrebarsko: Naklada Slap.

[11] Ofak, L. (2009). Public participation in environmental decision-making. In M. Kaštelan Mrak (Ed.), *Economics and Public Sector Management* (pp. 114-150. (115-117)). Rijeka: University of Rijeka, Faculty of Economics

[12] Petz B. , Kolesarić V. , & Ivanec D. (2012). *Petzova statistika: osnovne statističke metode za nematematičare.* Jastrebarsko: Naklada Slap

[13] Pletikosić M. (2012). *Odnos javnosti prema korištenju zamjenskog goriva u industriji cementa.* (Public attitudes towards the use of alternative fuel in cement industry). Master thesis. Zadar; University of Zadar

[14] Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction. Third edition.* London: Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications

TABLES

Table 1. Absolute and cumulative relative frequencies of the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional,* N=100.

Responses	Frequency	Cumulative relative frequency
0	51	51, 00
1	1	52, 00
2	48	100, 00

Legend: 0 - no; **1** - I don't know, I'm not sure; **2** - yes.

Table 2. Frequency of the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional* within *target groups*, N=100

Responses	SM	DE	ME	CI	CO	AS	CI	EA	PP	S/J	Total
0	4	1	4	3	2	10	10	2	8	7	51
1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2	6	8	6	7	8	0	0	8	2	3	48

Legend: 0 - no; **1** - I don't know, I'm not sure; **2** - yes.

SM - STUDY MAKERS – persons authorised by the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection;

DE – DEVELOPERS – investors;

ME – MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT/COMMITTEE – representatives of the governing body conducting the process, and members of committees for study evaluation;

CI – CITIES – representatives of the employees of the city administration for environmental protection responsible for conducting public debates and spatial planning representatives;

CO – COUNTIES – representatives of the employees of the county administration for environmental protection responsible for conducting public debates and spatial planning representatives;

AS – ASSOCIATIONS – representatives of non-governmental environmental associations;

CI – CIVIL INITIATIVES – representatives of NGOs and civil society who are involved in the process, but are not environmentally oriented;

EA – ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS – representatives of the Croatian Employers' Association, Croatian Chamber of Commerce, and other economic interest associations;

PP – POLITICAL PARTIES – representatives of political structures which are included in the process;

S/J – SCIENTISTS/JOURNALISTS – representatives of academic institutions and journalists who are involved in the process.

Table 3. Frequency of the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional* within *sector groups*, N=100

Responses	PUBLIC SECTOR	CIVIL SECTOR	ECONOMIC SECTOR	Total
0	16	28	7	67
1	0	0	1	3
2	24	2	22	30
Total	40	30	30	100

Legend: 0 - no; **1** - I don't know, I'm not sure; **2** - yes.

Public sector - *MIN. OF THE ENVIRONMENT/COMMITTEE, CITY, COUNTY, SCIENTISTS/JOURNALISTS*;

Civil sector - *ASSOCIATIONS, CIVIC INITIATIVES, POLITICAL PARTIES*;

Economic sector - *STUDY MAKERS, DEVELOPER S, ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS.*

Table 4. Results of post-hoc analysis carried out between target groups for the variable *expert committees_neutral and professional,* N=100.

	SM	**DE**	**ME**	**CI**	**CO**	**AS**	**CI**	**EA**	**PP**	**S/J**
SM		0. 93	1. 00	1. 00	0. 98	0. 04	0. 04	0. 98	0. 46	0. 82
DE	0. 93		0. 93	1. 00	1. 00	0. 00	0. 00	1. 00	0. 02	0. 09
ME	1. 00	0. 93		1. 00	0. 98	0. 04	0. 04	0. 98	0. 46	0. 82
CI	1. 00	1. 00	1. 00		1. 00	0. 01	0. 01	1. 00	0. 17	0. 46
CO	0. 98	1. 00	0. 98	1. 00		0. 00	0. 00	1. 00	0. 04	0. 17
AS	0. 04	0. 00	0. 04	0. 01	0. 00		1. 00	0. 00	0. 98	0. 82
CI	0. 04	0. 00	0. 04	0. 01	0. 00	1. 00		0. 00	0. 98	0. 82
EA	0. 98	1. 00	0. 98	1. 00	1. 00	0. 00	0. 00		0. 04	0. 17
PP	0. 46	0. 02	0. 46	0. 17	0. 04	0. 98	0. 98	0. 04		1. 00
S/J	0. 82	0. 09	0. 82	0. 46	0. 17	0. 82	0. 82	0. 17	1. 00	

Legend:

SM - STUDY MAKERS – persons authorised by the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection;

DE – DEVELOPERS – investors;

ME – MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT/COMMITTEE – representatives of the governing body conducting the process, and members of committees for study evaluation;

CI – CITIES – representatives of the employees of the city administration for environmental protection responsible for conducting public debates and spatial planning representatives;

CO – COUNTIES – representatives of the employees of the county administration for environmental protection responsible for conducting public debates and spatial planning representatives;

AS – ASSOCIATIONS – representatives of non-governmental environmental associations;

CI – CIVIL INITIATIVES – representatives of NGOs and civil society who are involved in the process, but are not environmentally oriented;

EA – ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS – representatives of the Croatian Employers' Association, Croatian Chamber of Commerce, and other economic interest associations;

PP – POLITICAL PARTIES – representatives of political structures which are included in the process;

S/J – SCIENTISTS/JOURNALISTS – representatives of academic institutions and journalists who are involved in the process.